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Weijermars, Janneke

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Janneke WEIJERMARS

«The Netherlands, the whole of Europe will soon unite » National and European identities in the Waterloo literature of the Low Countries, 1815-1915

Abstract

The Battle of Waterloo rocked Europe to its foundations and it was by far the largest battle ever fought in the Low Countries. In two of the victorious nations, Great Britain and what we now call Germany, the literary commemoration of Waterloo immediately developed a homogeneous heroic perspective, built around the central figures of the Duke of Wellington (in Britain) and Marshal Blücher (in Prussia). These two figures became national heroes who were used to construct and preserve the national identities Britain and Germany. Nevertheless, Waterloo literature of the Netherlands could not unambiguously represent a sense of national consciousness. Indeed, the fragmented history of the Low Countries and their importance for the political stability of Western Europe presented an ideal environment in which European self-images could be expressed. Therefore, this article investigates the relationship between national and European identities in the Waterloo literature of the Low Countries until the First World War.

Samenvatting

De Slag bij Waterloo is de grootste veldslag ooit op Nederlandse bodem uitgevochten. In twee van de winnende landen, Groot-Brittannië en Duitsland, kreeg de literaire herinnering aan Waterloo onmiddellijk een nationaal karakter en deze centreerde zich rond de centrale figuren Wellington en Blücher. Deze twee werden nationale helden die de nationale identiteit in Groot-Brittanië en Duitsland hielpen vormgeven. Vanwege de versnipperde geschiedenis van de Lage Landen, waarin de Zuidelijke Nederlanden zich in 1830 afscheidden van het Noorden, kon de slag bij Waterloo geen onverdeelde nationale herinnering worden. Dit maakt de weg vrij om de Waterlooliteratuur vanuit een Europees perspectief te bestuderen. Dit artikel onderzoekt op welke manier de Lage Landen en Europa worden verbeeld in de teksten over Waterloo en hoe de nationale en Europese representatie zich tot elkaar verhoudt.

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KU Leuven – Faculteit Letteren
Blijde-Inkomststraat 21 – Bus 3331
B 3000 Leuven (Belgium)
Contact : anke.gilleir@kuleuven.be & beatrijs.vanacker@kuleuven.be

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"The Netherlands, the whole of Europe will soon unite"

National and European identities in the Waterloo literature of the Low Countries, 1815-1915

> Loyalty devoid of affection, patriotism destitute of virtue, triumph without joy, and hope without confidence; what can be expected from the inspiration of such feelings, but cold adulation, unmeaning boasts, empty predictions, and commonplace sentiment?[1]

This quotation comes from the British author Josiah Conder, who wrote a review of Robert Southey's *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo* in August 1816.[2] It is just one of many examples of the contemporary critical reception of Waterloo literature as artificial, passionless and dull.[3] Like other European countries, the Low Countries have an exceptionally rich Waterloo literature, which comprises poems, novels, cantatas, theatre plays, children's books, sermons and songs. Despite this wealth, the reception of Waterloo literature from the Low Countries suffered the same fate. One of the main critics of Dutch Waterloo literature was the greatest Dutch writer of the 19th century, Multatuli. In 1865 he wrote a sparkling satire about the enormous flow of extremely patriotic and religious Waterloo poems and sermons that flooded the Dutch nation on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the battle. In his stinging satire, *De zegen Gods door Waterloo* [God's Blessing at Waterloo] the author sweeps aside all Dutch poets and preachers who wrote in grand clichés when describing the victory of Waterloo.[4] In the satire a certain A.Z.

1. Josiah Conder's review of *The poet's pilgrimage to Waterloo* by Robert Southey in: *Eclectic Review* (August 1816), cited by Philip Shaw, *Waterloo and the romantic imagination*, Hampshire/New York, Palgrave, 2002, 29.

2. This article is based on my research on Waterloo literature and has been partly published in Janneke Weijermars, *Stepbrothers. Southern Dutch literature and nation building under Willem I, 1814-1834*, Boston/Leiden, Brill, 2015, chapter 2; Janneke Weijermars, "De mythe van Waterloo. De Slag bij Waterloo in de Nederlandse literatuur, 1815-1830", in: Lotte Jensen & Nina Geerdink (eds.), *Oorlogsliteratuur in de vroegmoderne tijd. Vorm, identiteit en herinnering*, Hilversum, Verloren, 2013, 183-197; Janneke Weijermars, "'Heel Euroop zal zich terstond vereenen'. Europa in de Nederlandse Waterlooliteratuur", in: *De Negentiende Eeuw*, 2016, 40, 2, 84-103. Many thanks to Sonya Sherman for her help with the English translation. I would also like to thank the reviewers, including Rob van de Schoor, for their insightful comments on the paper.

3. Philip Shaw, *Waterloo and the romantic imagination*, 29.

4. Multatuli, *De zegen Gods door Waterloo. Gemoedelijke opmerkingen van A. Z.*, Amsterdam, R.C. Meijer, 1865. For more information about this work, see Dik van der Meulen, *Multatuli. Leven en werk van Eduard Douwes Dekker*, Nijmegen, SUN, 2002, 506-508.

speaks in overly lyrical terms about "the victory in Waterloo, where Prince Willem the Great of Orange, with the help of God, despite his early youth – I mean the early youth of the Prince – where the Prince, as I said, conquered the tyrant".[5] These phrases are repeated over and over again, which reinforces the humorous and ironic effect of Multatuli's text. In his *Ideën* [Ideas] the writer accused the Waterloo poets of "vantardise" [bragging], which he defined as a "lelyk gebrek" [an ugly shortcoming].[6] Ironically, *De zegen Gods door Waterloo* became the most famous work of Dutch Waterloo literature.

This negative contemporary reception is the likely reason why Dutch Waterloo literature has received scant attention to date. Nevertheless, something rather exceptional can be found in this specific corpus of texts. Contemporary critics mainly discussed Waterloo literature from aesthetic, national, and heroic perspectives. Some researchers have made a connection between the British Waterloo literature and Romanticism: the idea of the Battle of Waterloo as "victory sublime".[7] Others have investigated the German and British Waterloo literature in the context of nation building. In two of the victorious nations, Great Britain and what we now call Germany, the literary commemoration of Waterloo immediately developed a homogeneous heroic perspective, built around the central figures of the Duke of Wellington (in Britain) and Marshal Blücher (in Prussia). These two figures became national heroes who were used to construct and preserve the national identities Britain and Germany.[8] Nevertheless, Waterloo literature of the Netherlands could not unambiguously represent a sense of national consciousness. This enables us to take an international perspective, placing the study of Waterloo literature in a wider context and contributing to current scholarly debates about the historical roots of European consciousness.[9] Therefore, this article investigates the relationship between national and European identities in the Waterloo literature of the Low Countries until the First World War.[10]

The corpus consists of approximately 200 texts written in what is now The Netherlands and Flanders during the nineteenth century, and referring to the Battle of Waterloo. It includes poems, novels, cantatas, testimonies, theatre plays, children's books, sermons, (non-historiographical) essays, and songs. This research

5. "[...] de overwinning by Waterloo, waar Prins Willem de Groote van Oranje, met Godes hulp, ondanks zyn prille jeugd – ik bedoele: des prinsen prille jeugd – waar die prins, zegge ik, dien geweldenaar overwon" (Multatuli, *De zegen Gods door Waterloo*, 1).

6. Multatuli, *Ideën II*, Amsterdam, G.L. Funke, 1880, 132.

7. E.g. in Philip Shaw, *Waterloo and the romantic imagination*.

8. E.g. in Linda Colley, *Britons. Forging the nation 1707-1837*, New Haven/London, Yale University Press, 2009, 376; Christopher Clarck, "The wars of liberation in Prussian memory. Reflections on the memorialization of war in early nineteenth-century Germany", in: *The Journal of Modern History*, 1996, 68, 3, 550-576; Elisa Renee Milkes, *A battle's legacy. Waterloo in nineteenth-century Britain*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2002; Kevin Pryor, *The mobilization of memory. The battle of Waterloo in German and British memory, 1815-1915*, unpublished master thesis, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, 2010.

9. See e.g. Gerard Delanty, *Inventing Europe. Idea, identity, reality,* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 1995; Andreas Musolff, "Political imagery of Europe. A *house* without *exit doors*?", in: *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 2000, 21, 3, 216-229; Pim den Boer, Heinz Duchhardt, Georg Kreis & Wolfgang Schmale (eds.), *Europäische Erinnerungsorte*, 3 parts, München, Oldenburg Verlag, 2012.

10. The First World War brought the nineteenth century's idea of European order and stability to a grinding halt (see for example Sandi E. Cooper, *Patriotic pacifism. Waging war on war in Europe, 1815-1914*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994). Preliminary research on this subject has shown that this war overshadowed the literary memory of Waterloo in the Low Countries, and the production of Waterloo texts decreased. Consequently, this article covers the period from 1815 to 1915.

is rooted in the domain of imagology, a discipline that studies the construction of stereotypes and self-images. First, this article examines how recollections of Waterloo have forged the construction of a self-image in the Low Countries. Secondly it explores how this national identity is related to the cultural connotations, associations and representations of "Europe" and notions of "European" identity in Dutch Waterloo literature. Such representations are the product of the imagination or, in other words, they are literary tropes. It is not the aim to determine which self-images are "true", but to investigate how they are created and which became dominant or influential in the Low Countries after Waterloo. Waterloo literature presents a very fertile corpus in which to investigate such matters, because the ideal self-image is always explicitly or implicitly outlined in contrast to one's opponent.[11] And the opponent of the Netherlands is of course Napoleon. Opponents and adherents of Napoleon had different ideas of what Europe represented, and distinguished images of their own nation from those of the enemy. In this way, Waterloo became a catalyst in the process of constructing these images.

1. The national image

The United Kingdom of the Netherlands was founded in the years 1814 and 1815 in order to secure the stability of the region, which comprised what we call today The Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. The Congress of Vienna considered the new kingdom as a buffer state, to protect England and Prussia from the imperious French. This arrangement was also the personal wish of the later King Willem I of Orange, whose government consequently drafted a strong cultural, religious and language policy, attempting to blend the different parts of the new country together and aiming to create a buffer state both geographically and culturally.[12] These policies provoked significant antagonism and opposition in the South, particularly in the fields of religion, economics and jurisdiction. Overall, the politics of unification were based on different views of the two parts of the nation, in which the Belgian provinces were far inferior.[13]

Although the kingdom came into existence in 1814, from the King's perspective it was actually the Battle of Waterloo that should be regarded as the beginning of regained independence for the Low Countries.[14] For King Willem, Waterloo was a gift from heaven, because it set all his political troubles aside. Fear of a new annexation to France somewhat softened the Belgians' mistrust toward the new King of Orange. Therefore, many of them joined the Dutch troops. The unity within the Netherlands' army and the heroic role of the Crown Prince of Orange who had paid dearly for his valour with a bullet wound, turned the Battle of Waterloo henceforth into an almost mythical event that would be lauded during the entire 19th century. The bloody battle had the potential to grow into a symbol of unification and reconciliation, replacing the nation's memory of its divided past.[15]

11. Manfred Beller & Joep Leerssen (eds.), *Imagology. The cultural construction and literary representation of national characters. A critical survey*, Amsterdam, Rodopi, 2007, XIV.

12. Janneke Weijermars, *Stepbrothers*, chapters 1 & 6.

13. *Ibid*., chapters 11 & 15.

14. For this "myth of Waterloo", see Matthijs Lok, "De cultuur van het vergeten onder Willem I", in: Rik Vosters & Janneke Weijermars (eds.), *Taal, cultuurbeleid en natievorming onder Willem I*, Brussel, KVAB, 2011, 61-86.

15. *Ibid*., 63.

Willem I himself readily stoked that myth. It is evident that the King was fully aware of the battle's nation-building effect in his address to the States-General on 8 August 1815, scarcely two months after the victory, in which he forecast that "the story of Quatre-Bras and Waterloo would point to two dazzling pillars of the new Netherlands state". He considered himself fortunate to be the father of two sons whose "turn it was to help plant those pillars with their arms and sprinkle them with their blood".[16] He was referring first of all to the injuries that the enemy had inflicted on his progeny, but at the same time he was metaphorically applying his paternity to the vision of his new role as monarch. In his proclamation of 2 December 1813 Willem had already intimated that after the House of Orange's nineteen years of absence from the Netherlands, he himself regarded it as being "restored to the people, whom I have never ceased to love [...] as a father in the midst of his family".[17] The family metaphor connected Willem with Waterloo, for he characterised the contestants from North and South as sons who had collectively fought for liberation and, moreover, embodied the birth of the new state.

This family metaphor, regarding the nation as a household of father (the king), mother (the queen) and two children (representing the soldiers, citizens from the Northern and Southern Netherlands) resounded for decades in the Northern Dutch Waterloo literature. For example, in the poem of 1817 "The Battle of Waterloo" by Vincent Loosjes, the dramatic climax was the wounding of the Prince and his horse Wexy. At the end of the poem, the Prince's mother is taking care of her wounded son, but at the same time she is depicted as the mother of the whole nation.[18] In 1816 the Koninklijke Maatschappij voor Schone Kunsten en Letteren [Royal Society of Fine Arts and Letters] in the pro-Orange southern city of Ghent organised a prize contest around the topic "The benefactions of the Battle of Waterloo". The Northern Dutch prizewinning poets Katharina Wilhelmina Bilderdijk (first prize), Johannes Bosscha (incentive), Petronella Moens and Pieter Rutger Feith (both honourable mention) were unanimously emphasising the fraternal bond on the battlefield between Dutch and Belgians, which they saw as a sign of the heartfelt and fruitful unification ahead for the people of the Netherlands.[19] This was also evident in the Bilderdijk's poem:

> Years have not passed us
> Since fate divided us;
> But the result did not estrange,
> Those who cultivated one soil.
> Indeed, the Belgian and the Batavian
> Now cheer fondly,
> Turn released from the chain,

16. All translations are made by the author and Sonya Sherman. "[Dat] de historie van Quatre-Bras en Waterloo twee schitterende zuilen van den nieuwen Nederlandschen Staat [zou] aanwijzen"; "[Vader te zijn van twee zonen, die] het te beurte viel, die zuilen met hunnen arm te helpen vesten en met hun bloed te besproeijen", in: J.J.F. Noordziek (ed.), *Verslag der Handelingen van de Staten-Generaal gedurende de vergaderingen van 1814-1815*, Den Haag, Nationaal Archief, 1889 [pagination missing].

17. "Teruggegeven aan het volk, dat ik nimmer opgehouden heb te beminnen [...] als een vader in het midden van zijn Huisgezin", cited in N.C.F. van Sas, *De metamorfose van Nederland. Van oude orde naar moderniteit 1750-1900*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2004, 465.

18. Vincent Loosjes, *De veldslag bij Waterloo en dichtproeven*, Haarlem, A. Loosjes, 1817, 29-31.

19. See: *Verzameling der zangstukken bekroond door de koninklyke maetschappy van fraeie konsten en letterkunde te Gent, den 18 van weimaend 1816*, Gend, P.F. de Goesin-Verhaeghe, 1816, [1].

To one father again.[20]

According to Bilderdijk North and South were "reconciled through necessity", and other poets spoke of the power that combatants on the battlefield had drawn from their familial relationship: "My brothers shall definitely not yield. / Great is their valour and strong their fist".[21] The comparison with the use of "father" for King Willem (discussed above) is striking.

Except for the family metaphor, the Northern Netherlands' version of the battle typically emphasised the association between the House of Orange and freedom, prosperity and the heroic deeds of the people of the Netherlands. At the end of his poem, Vincent Loosjes referred once again to the blood of the House of Orange that had to be sacrificed for freedom:

> Yet if the craving to rule ever again dares to mock the Netherlanders,
> And if violence takes its vassals to Batavian's land,
> Then, as now, will blaze in Nassau's noble blood,
> That love of the Fatherland, that inextinguishable valour
> [...]
> Thus sees the latest generation, in the provinces of the Netherlands,
> Beside Nassau's glory, the vested seats of
> Religion, freedom, virtue, held together by the bond of solidarity,
> Of prosperity, heroic fame and love of the Fatherland![22]

In the North, the identity of the new nation centred on freedom, virtue, courage, brotherhood and solidarity. The Prince of Orange represented all these qualities and embodied them in person.

The identity that arises from Southern Dutch Waterloo literature just after 1815 is rather different and also more complex. The perception of events was articulated in a rather traditional image by – among others – a productive occasional poet from Antwerp: the Catholic Jan Antoon Pauwels. He wrote a long poem about the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, titled *De Belgen* [The Belgians]. Pauwels composed his poem entirely around Belgian attributes of "national" character that he considered typical, such as loyalty, integrity, decency, bravery, harmony and, particularly, piety. The poet had placed his own people so centrally that, for completeness, he had to mention in a footnote that a "large armed force of the united allies" had also been involved in the Battle of Waterloo.[23] Pauwels considered the victory as

20. "Jaren zijn ons niet vergaan / Sints ons 't lot verdeelde; / Maar de vrucht vervreemde niet, / Die één bodem teelde. / Ja, de Belg en Batavier /Juichen even teder, / Keeren van den boei verlost, / Tot één vader weder", in: *Verzameling der zangstukken*, 9.

21. "Mijn broeders zullen vast niet wijken. / Groot is hun moed en sterk hun vuist", in: *Verzameling der zangstukken*, 19.

22. "Doch durft ooit Heerschzucht weêr de Nederlanders honen, / 't Geweld zijn slaven naar het erf van Bato troonen, / Dan blake steeds, als nu, in Nassau's edel bloed / Die min voor 't Vaderland, die onuitbluschbre moed / [...] / Zoo ziet het laatst geslacht, in Nederlands gewesten, / Naast Nassau's glorievaan, nog steeds de zetels vesten / Van Godsdienst, Vrijheid, Deugd, omsnoerd door d'Eendragtsband, / Van Voorspoed, Heldenroem en Min voor 't Vaderland!", in: Vincent Loosjes, *De veldslag bij Waterloo*, 31-32.

23. "[...] talryke Legermagt der vereenigde Bondgenooten", in: J.A.F. Pauwels, *De Belgen*, Antwerpen, G.J. Bincken, [1815], [13].

deliverance and, according to the poet, "we had to attribute this strange favour not to any persons but to merciful God".[24]

The House of Orange is not mentioned at all in this version of the Battle of Waterloo. In fact, the Southern poets who described and depicted the event in the first years after the battle, honoured their own Belgian heroes with special poems, like for instance General Van Merlen from Antwerp, who died on the field of Waterloo. Van Merlen's praise was sung in numerous Waterloo publications in the South and the tone of the tribute verses was comparable to the expressions of praise that the Prince of Orange had attracted in the North.[25] The extolling of Van Merlen, mostly heard around his birthplace Antwerp, was symptomatic of Southern Waterloo literature, which focused particularly on the Belgians' role during the battle. Thus the victory also became closely attached to the national character of the people of the Southern Netherlands.

Other poets made less of valour and took as their main theme the typically Belgians readiness to help. For example, in caring for Waterloo victims, as described by the Antwerp poet Marten Jacob van der Maesen in his poem *Op the gelukkige zegepraelen* [On the Happy Triumph] from 1815:

> Yes, no sooner is a number of badly wounded men sent to our city,
> maimed, utterly exhausted, almost dying,
> When young and old, full of care and eagerness,
> Relieve their pains benevolently,
> And then one sees Scotsmen supported;
> Englishmen or Prussians are brought in;
> Over there Belgians are seen carried on the backs of Belgians!
> While here a fragile mother cries:
> Her suckling infant at the breast does not stop her working;
> She comes to strengthen the weakest members with food and drink;
> Beauty itself offers in abundance,
> Wholesome food to the sick.[26]

Van der Maesen's poem demonstrates that the aftermath of Waterloo had had at least as much impact on the Belgians as the battle itself. While the allies celebrated the victory, total consternation at the devastation and the personal suffering prevailed in the Southern Netherlands. This also shaped the self-image of the helpful and devoted Belgian.

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24. 'Wy moesten *deéze zonderlinge Gunst* aen geene menschen, maer aen den bermhertigen God toeschryven', in: J.A.F. Pauwels, *De Belgen*, [7–8].

25. E.g. Jan Frans Willems, *Graf-schrift op den generael J.B. Van Merlen*, Antwerpen, J.S. Schoesetters, 1815; A.J. Stips, "Op het graf van den generael Van Merlen, gesneuveld in den veldslag van 18 juny 1815", in: *Antwerpschen Almanach van Nut en Vermaek voor het jaer 1816*, Antwerpen, H.J. Vander Heij, 1816, 27.

26. "Ja, naeuwlyks word onz' Stad een aental diep-gewonden, / Verminkt, doodsch, afgemat, schier stervend' toegezonden, / Of jong en oud, vol zorg en drift, / Verzagt hunn' pynen doór een' gift, / Hier ziet men Schotten onderschraegen; / Daer worden Engelschen of Pruysschen voortgeleyd; / Ginds ziet men Belgen op den rug van Belgen draegen! / Wyl hier een' ted're Moeder schreyt: / Haer' zuyg'ling aen de borst belet haer niet te werken; / Zy komt, doór drank en spys, de zwakste leên versterken; / De Schoonheyd zelv' bied, ryk belaên, / De kranken 't nuttig voedsel aen", in: M.J. Van der Maesen, *Op de gelukkige zegepraelen, behaeld doór de Hoogvorstelyke bondgenoóten op de Fransche Legers den 18 Juny 1815*, Antwerpen, J.S. Schoesetters, [1815], 6-7.

The Prince of Orange leads the Dutch forces in Quatre-Bras, 1815. Illustrator: Willem Hendrik

2. The European image

It is clear that the Battle of Waterloo couldn't unambiguously represent a sense of national consciousness in the new Kingdom of the Netherlands because of the different depictions of the battle in the Northern and Southern Netherlands, and there were more complicating factors to come. The Kingdom comprised a Walloon population and a small part of the Flemish population that had fought with French forces. This made the commemoration a mixed affair from the start. Moreover, after the Belgian Revolution in 1830 the Kingdom had already fallen apart. After Belgian independence, the commemoration of Waterloo became even more fragmented: for authors of the Flemish Movement, Waterloo became a symbol of their loyalty to the Allied Army and the Dutch Crown, as in the extensive Waterloo oeuvre of Prudens van Duyse, who wrote several Waterloo poems and also a *Waterloo cantata* (1826).[27] The Rattachists, who advocated joining Wallonia to France, continued to regard Waterloo as a fatal historical mistake. The poem *La destruction du lion de Waterloo* (1907) by Albert du Bois for example, expresses these sentiments. The Dutch perception of Waterloo was more nationally oriented, although there was no consensus here either, as already shown in the case of Multatuli.

These diverse attitudes towards the symbolism of Waterloo, combined with the geographical and political position of the Low Countries between the three superpowers France, England and Prussia, provide opportunities to explore perspectives beyond a national point of view. Such a view reinforces the assumption that the Low Countries were more receptive to perspectives other than their regional or national remembrance of the battle. This is supported by the fact that the Waterloo literature from other European nations was very present in the Dutch and Belgian literary fields. Many Dutch translations of foreign Waterloo literature were

27. E.g. his poems "De moeder te Waterloo" [The Mother in Waterloo] (1829), "De grijsaard te Waterloo" [The Greybeard in Waterloo] (1830), de "Hymne voor 't vaderland" [The Anthem for the Fatherland] (1855).

printed and reprinted during the nineteenth century and after, especially prose texts. Translations of Waterloo poems are harder to find.

For the greater part, translated Waterloo literature consists of fictionalised testimonies (letters, diaries), for example the translation of Walter Scott's *Pauls letters to his kinsfolk* (1816) [*Pauls brieven in 1815, van de velden van Waterloo en Quatre Bras tot Parijs, geschreven aan zijne vrienden*]. This work was published in Amsterdam, only one year after the original edition has appeared. Scott's depiction of the events was very popular in the Netherlands. In 1834, the anonymous collection *Waterloo. Verhalen en krijgsbedrijven* [Waterloo. Stories and Military Operations] was published, which also included fictionalised testimonies. In his introduction the translator refers explicitly to the glorious reputation of the Scottish author in the Netherlands.[28] French Waterloo literature was translated too, such as works by Victor Hugo, including his famous second part *Les Miserables* in 1862. The Dutch translation was published in the same year as the French version, with numerous reprints in the Northern and Southern Low Countries.[29] His famous Waterloo poem "L'Expiation" from 1853 also found its way into the Netherlands.[30] As far as I know, it was not until the 20th century that other Waterloo prose was translated. The Dutch translation of Karl May's *Der Weg nach Waterloo* appeared in 1966; Stendhals *La chartreuse de Parme* (1839) was recently retranslated in the Netherlands by Theo Kars with a preface by Arnon Grunberg (2003); Chateaubriands *Mémoires d'Outre-tombe* (completed in 1841) was also published in 2000 in a new translation by Frans van Woerden.

The number of references to the Allied troops in the original Dutch and Flemish Waterloo literature indicates a clear awareness that the Low Countries could have never won Waterloo without the help of other European nations, and that only the Allied Army could guarantee a stable and prosperous Europe. We find these references throughout the entire corpus. The Antwerp writer of occasional poetry Adriaan Jozef Stips wrote a short poem in 1816 in the *Antwerpschen Almanak tot Nut en Vermaek* [Antwerp Almanac for Benefit and Enjoyment], in which he praised the partnership of the three heroes of Waterloo: Wellington, Blücher and Von Bülow.[31] In 1865, the Flemish liberal poet Julius de Geyter wrote about collaboration and solidarity in times of war that set aside any language problems between the soldiers on the battlefield:

> O! Legions are resurrected from the ground;
> Ten peoples stand together, armoured in the steel;
> Their eyes show they cannot understand each other:
> "The field of Waterloo will be his grave!"

28. *Waterloo, Verhalen en krijgsbedrijven*, Amsterdam, C.L. Schleijer, 1834, ii.

29. E.g. the translation of Calisch (Rotterdam 1862), the stage adaptation of De Haan (Amsterdam 1873), the translated fragments in the periodical *De echo* (s.l. 1895) and the magazine *Onze leestafel* 69 (Antwerpen 1918).

30. The best-known fragment of "L'Expiation" are the verses "Waterloo! Waterloo! Waterloo! Morne plaine! / Comme une onde qui bout dans une urne trop pleine. / Dans ton cirque de bois, de coteaux, de vallons, / La pâle mort mêlait les sombres bataillons". Koen Stassijns translated these verses recently in his collection *De mooiste van Victor Hugo* [Victor Hugo's finest poems], Tielt, Lannoo, 2008 with "Waterloo! Waterloo! Waterloo! treurig veld! / Zoals een golf in een te volle urne welt, / Is in je bos, je dalen, heuvels af en aan / De dood in trieste regimenten opgegaan".

31. Adriaan Jozef Stips, 'Op Wellington, Blucher en Bulow', in: *Antwerpschen Almanach van Nut en Vermaek voor het jaer 1816*, Antwerpen, H.J. Vander Heij, 1816, 27.

> No language is as strong as the retaliation in the eyes.[32]

Unity and solidarity within Europe after 1815 is also described in the devotional book for youth by Dutch author Van Lummel:

> The future of Europe now seemed to be assured. The monarchs of Europe had learned that only through mutual friendship could they stand strong against a nation that continuously pretended to be the ruler of Europe.[33]

The poet Jan Bastijaan Christemeijer from Holland took part in the battle himself, and wrote in his poem for Waterloo's fiftieth anniversary:

> It was there, that, fifty years ago
> the brave Dutch army stood
> United in alliance
> With British and German armies,
> Who, led by Wellington,
> Took decisive action on the battlefield
> Fighting for international law and freedom,
> Against Napoleon.[34]

Unity, solidarity, effectiveness and mutual friendship prepared Europe for a stable future, in which freedom for all European nations was guaranteed. In these texts, the national perspective was a starting point; an image of Europe was developing, as in Taco de Beer's play:

> The Netherlands, the whole of Europe will soon unite
> Each one of us will lend his force, his arm, his property, his life
> To save his country.
> [...]
> We praise the solidary in our midst[35]

This "layered" identity is also visible in the construction of European heroes. In processes of nation building and the development of a national identity, heroes

32. "O! Legioenen zijn als uit den grond gerezen; / Tien volkren staan bijeen, geharnast in het staal; / Verstaan ze elkander niet, hunne oogen laten 't lezen: / 'Het veld van Waterloo zal hem een grafkuil wezen!' / En als de wraak in 't oog, zoo krachtig spreekt geen taal." The poem was published in 1865 for the first time, but reprinted at least twelve times: Julius de Geyter, *Zuid-Nederland eene halve eeuw na Waterloo*, twelfth edition, Antwerpen, Mees & Co, 1878, 8.

33. "De toekomst van Europa scheen nu voor het vervolg verzekerd. De vorsten van Europa hadden geleerd, dat ze alleen door onderlinge vriendschap sterk waren tegen over een volk, dat het er bestendig op scheen toe te leggen om de beheerscher van Europa te zijn", in: H.J. van Lummel, *Waterloo-dag voor jonge lieden*, Utrecht, Kemink & Zoon, 1865, 61.

34. "'t Was dáar, dat, vóor nu vijftig jaren, / Weêr Neêrland's dapper leger stond, / Vereenigd toen in strijdverbond / Met Britsche en Duitsche krijg'renscharen, / Die, aangevoerd door Wellington, / Ten veld slagvaardig opgetreden, Voor volkenregt en vrijheid streden, / In tweekamp met Napoleon", in: J.B. Christemeijer, *Bij een avond-bezoek op 18 junij van het Slagveld van Waterloo. Dichterlijke herinnering*, Utrecht, Kemink en Zoon, 1865, 4.

35. "Maar Neêrland, heel Euroop zal zich terstond vereenen / Elk zal zijn kracht, zijn arm, zijn goed, zijn leven leenen / Tot redding van zijn land. / [...] Wij roemen op den eendrachtszin, die in ons midden leeft", in: Taco, *Mirt en lauweren. Kamerspel, ter herinnering aan den slag bij Waterloo vervaardigd*, Gorinchem, G.C. van der Mast, 1865, 14, 34.

create solidarity. Moreover, they serve as role models by providing examples of good citizenship and patriotism.[36]

The Prince of Orange after his injury in the field hospital, 1815. Illustrator: Willem Hendrik Hoogkamer. Collection Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, number RP-P-1937-1006

In his article about the disparities between national and European identities, the historian and political theorist Miroslav Hroch explains that a process of transition from national to European identity relies on a mutual sense of solidarity and the notion of shared history.[37] The Dutch hero of the Battle of Waterloo was unmistakably the Crown Prince of Orange, but he shared his podium with other European heroes, Wellington and Blücher, who were also lauded extensively in the Waterloo literature of the Low Countries. This transition is highly evident in Waterloo literature, to the extent that these heroes are frequently mentioned and praised, especially in theatre plays and children's literature. For example, in the children's story by one Van Albada from 1865, a grandfather tells his grandson about his experiences on the field of Waterloo. Grandfather inculcates in him an awareness "to speak with nothing but reverence for men like Wellington and Blucher, who were my teachers on the battlefield". The grandson has to make a promise to look after grandfather's Waterloo medal, hanging amongst the portraits of Wellington, Blücher and the Prince of Orange.[38] Cornelis Boon articulates a similar argument in his rhymed theatre play:

> But besides Wellington, one can also mention other men
> Who boast no less skill and loyalty
> They stand beside him, or, under his command
> are his power and strength. - You surely know of Blucher,

36. Raul Calzoni, "Hero", in: Manfred Beller & Joep Leerssen, *Imagology*, 332-333; Lotte Jensen, *De verheerlijking van het verleden. Helden, literatuur en natievorming in de negentiende eeuw*, Nijmegen, Vantilt, 2008, 9-12.

37. Miroslav Hroch, "Zwischen nationaler und europäischer Identität", in: Pim den Boer, Heinz Duchhardt, Georg Kreis & Wolfgang Schmale (eds.), *Europäische Erinnerungsorte* 1, München, Oldenbourg Verlag, 2012, 75-88, see also http://www.lipa.cz/doc/31/04.pdf, there 11-14.

38. B.L. van Albada, *De oude dragonder. Geschiedkundige beschrijving van den Slag van Waterloo, hoofdzakelijk voor de Nederlandsche schooljeugd*, Oosterwolde, G.S. de Tempe, 1865, 17, 20.

The gray Prussian hero, who proved his courage
And dispatched the French army through his bravery
While the fame of the emperor is extinguished by his fame?[39]

The question then arises: what did these European heroes represent and how could they be an example for readers?

The antagonism between opponents and adherents of Napoleon was crucial for the construction of Europe's self-image: the ideal Europe is explicitly or implicitly outlined in contrast to one's opponent.[40] Waterloo literature may seem problematic in that respect, because Napoleon and his army were in fact part of the European continent. This geographical overlap complicates the exclusion. Nevertheless, the authors of several texts in the corpus make a strict distinction between Napoleon's world and Europe. During the Waterloo-celebrations in Amsterdam in 1865, 800 children sang songs based on texts by famous Dutch poets such as Hendrik Tollens and Jan Pieter Heije. In these songs, Napoleon is associated with violence, slavery and weakness. Europe stood for freedom, peace, justice, brotherhood and solidarity.[41] In the poem by Willem Messchert, written in 1815 and reprinted in 1865, a comparable distinction is made: Napoleon stands for war, murder, destruction, deprivation and the French are depicted as monsters. Europe is again associated with peace, fertility and bravery.[42]

Fertility has a dual meaning here: it refers to the battlefield, which was initially a place of death and destruction, but in the end will be a fertile farmland again. The opposition between destruction and fertility metaphorically refers to the forthcoming prosperous future for Europe after the final defeat of Napoleon. Messchert describes Napoleon's actions in Waterloo as a "sulphur flame" of the volcano Etna, a "land plague", and a "spring tide", after Napoleon escaped from Elba. Napoleon is depicted as an

African south wind
from burning deserts
a plague epidemic, which has no resistance,
Suffocating in the advance
[...]
Accelerating its drift
to punish Europe.[43]

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39. "Maar nevens Wellington kan men ook mannen noemen / Op wier beleid en trouw niet minder valt te roemen, / Die hem ter zijde staan, of, onder zijn bevel / Zijn kracht en sterkte zijn. – Gij kent toch Blücher wel, / Der Pruissen grijzen held, die van zijn moed deed blijken / En 't Fransche leger door zijn dapperheid deed wijken / Reeds al des keizers roem heeft door zijn roem verdoofd?", in: K. Boon, *1815. Herinnering aan Waterloo. Dramatische schets in drie tafereelen voor rederijkers*, Nieuwe Niedorp, J. Groot, 1865, 8-9.

40. Manfred Beller & Joep Leerssen, *Imagology*, xiv.

41. *Programma en feestliederen op den gedenkdag van Waterloo, [in het] Paleis voor Volksvlijt*, Amsterdam, s.p., 1865.

42. Willem Messchert, *De veldslag van Waterloo*, Vlaardingen, J.F.C. Brückwilder, 1865.

43. "[...] Afrikaanse Zuidenwind / uit brandende woestijnen / een pestgloed, die geen weêrstand vindt, / verstikkend bij 't verschijnen / [...] / Versnelt zijn drift, Euroop ter straf", in: Willem Messchert, *De veldslag van Waterloo*, 1-2, 6, 14.

After Napoleon's plagues have devastated Europe, the victory of the Allied Army brings a new daybreak with sunshine that makes everything flourish again.[44]

Apart from the negative associations attached to the figure of Napoleon, he was also considered as somebody from outside the European continent. Messchert compares Napoleon to "a tiger, in the Libyan wood", an "African south wind" and connected him to burning deserts, which is of course not a typical European image.[45] Other poets write about Napoleon's plans to flee to America, and his exile to St. Helena, "an African island". These descriptions serve to confirm that Napoleon can be no part of Europe's glorious heritage.[46]

In addition to the sense of community, the hero worship, and the distinction between Europe and Napoleon, we can also distinguish different kinds of metaphors that are used to depict Europe. In the national representation, the family metaphor was often used to describe unity and solidarity within the nation. Because family metaphors suggest a natural, biological relation, they very effectively encompass one domain (region, nation) and exclude others.[47] It is remarkable that, to my knowledge, this metaphor has not been employed in the European representation: the Allied soldiers are not described as brothers, cousins or other family members. One explanation could be that Europe did not have a father figure, or a leader that stood above all nations. Another explanation may be that family metaphors remained exclusively in the national discourse, and could not be used for the representation of Europe as well.

Other metaphors did make the crossing from national to European representation. One such instance is that of the animal metaphor. In the Waterloo literature, Europe is often depicted as a lion, sometimes as a tiger.[48] These kinds of images are rooted in the national and regional representation: in Western Europe the lion is of course a very popular heraldic animal of great symbolic value, suggesting that the inhabitants of this particular region are blessed with qualities as nobility, power and freedom.[49] It is surprising that the European bull does not appear in the corpus. In that story, the supreme god Zeus transformed himself into a white bull and carried the goddess Europa on his back from the North coast of Africa to Crete, after which she founded Europe.[50] In Waterloo literature the lite-

44. *Ibid*., 15.

45. *Ibid*., 1, 12.

46. J.P. Schaberg, *De getelde dagen. Een geschenk voor de Nederlandsche kinderen, op het gouden gedenkfeest van de overwinning bij Waterloo*, Den Haag, A. van Hoogstraten en Zoon, 1865, 61; B.L. van Albada, *De oude dragonder*, 19.

47. Anthony D. Smith, *Ethno-symbolism and nationalism. A cultural approach*, New York, Routledge, 2009, 8-9; Steve Reicher & Nick Hopkins, *Self and nation. Categorization, contestation and mobilization*, Londen, Sage, 2001, 92-96; Andreas Musolff, "Metaphor scenarios in public discourse", in: *Metaphor and symbol*, 2006, 1, 23-38.

48. Europe is a lion and Napoleon an eagle in, among others: Prudens van Duyse, *Waterloo kantate*, Brussel, G. Wittigh, 1826, 16, 18. One B. van Bruggen writes about the eagle eyes of Napoleon in *De Slag bij Waterloo aan kinderen verhaald*, Franeker, B. Behrns, 1865, 8.

49. Wolfgang Schmale, *Geschichte und Zukunft der Europaïsche Identität*, Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 2008, 71; Steve Reicher & Nick Hopkins, *Self and nation. Categorization, contestation and mobilization*, Londen, Sage, 2001, 93-94. The lion is the heraldic animal of The Netherlands and Belgium, but it is also the symbol of, among others, Finland, the Dutch province of Limburg, Georgia and Great Britain.

50. The myth of the European bull is described in the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, and cultural depictions of the bull are analysed in – among others – Chiara Bottici & Benoît Challand, *Imagining Europe. Myth, memory and identity*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2013, chapter 4, and in

rary representation starts from the national discourse (the lion) and the overarching, European image of the bull remains out of sight.

Another kind of metaphor in the Waterloo literature concerns the depiction of Europe as a body. In the 16th century, the map of Europe was drawn for the first time in the shape of a woman. This *Europa in forma virginis*, later renamed as *Europa regina*, dates from 1537 and was published by Johannes Putsch.[51] The depiction of nations as a body in language and literature is much older. Andreas Musolff states in his article about *body politics* in Europe, that the use of the body metaphor has a long history in social and political contexts, and is still very present in current debates about the nation and the present European Union.[52] Famous in this respect is the phrase of the 16th century philosopher Thomas Hobbes, who described the nation as "an artificiall man; though of greater stature and strength than the naturall, for whose protection and defence it was intended".[53] Of all the parts of the body, the heart is used the most in a European context because of the vulnerability and the central place of the organ. The body metaphor is also used in the Waterloo literature, for example in Prudens van Duyse's *Waterloo kantate* (1826), in which he uses a motto from the famous Dutch poet Hendrik Tollens (1780-1856).[54] In this motto Europe is described as a human body that is battered, trampled and bruised, but is breaking loose from its chains and stands up against the enemy.[55] Van Duyse continues this body metaphor when he describes the start of the battle: on the 18th of June 1815, Europe awoke from a sleep that was too short ["uit een te korte slaap gewekt"], referring to the heart-rending fight before the final battle. She covers "her brave chest / With impenetrable armour plates" ["haar gramme borst / Met ondoordringbre harnasplaten"].[56] Other poets like Messchert make references in their poems to the heart of Europe that is threatened by Napoleon's "iron arm" and his "fist of steel".[57] The heart refers to several features that authors also link to Europe: both are associated with life, power and solidarity. A vital heart function is also a condition for life, contrary to the hand or fist of Napoleon, which can be missed.

Michael WINTLE, *Europa and the bull. Europe and European Studies*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2004, 10-11.

51. Wolfgang SCHMALE, *Geschichte und Zukunft der Europaïsche Identität*, 63.

52. Andreas MUSOLFF, "The heart of the European body politic. British and German perspectives on Europe's central organ", in: *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 2004, 5/6, 437.

53. Cited in: *Ibidem*.

54. Tollens wrote his poem already in 1813, after Napoleon's defeat in Leipzig. Van Duyse added Tollens's poem to the Waterloo literature by attaching this fragment to his cantata.

55. "Schouwt rond: Europa roert de lenden, / Gekneusd van 't hollend oorlogsros, / En woelt, van onder 't wigt der benden, / Zich vreeslijk uit haar keten los. / De looden voet, die haar vertrapte, / Die troon en rijk te morzel stapte, / Vindt steun, noch schoor, noch rustpunt meer; / En 't reuzenbeeld, haar opgeslagen, / Te lang met schaamte en schand gedragen / Schokt, waggelt, stort en gruizelt neêr", in: Prudens VAN DUYSE, *Waterloo kantate*, 14.

56. Prudens VAN DUYSE, *Waterloo kantate*, 16.

57. Willem MESSCHERT, *De veldslag van Waterloo*, 4; *Programma en feestliederen*, [pagination missing].

Meeting between Wellington and Blücher after the Battle of Waterloo, 1815. Illustrator: Willem Hendrik Hoogkamer. Collection Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, number RP-P-OB-87.190

Conclusion

The literary representations of the nation and Europe are rich and diverse, and illustrate how authors imagined their country and Europe. It shows how they build and develop identity, and that identity can be multi-layered, so that a European identity can co-exist alongside a national identity - as long as there remains a sense of shared history between the two.

The European reading of Waterloo literature provides some insights that could serve as a basis for further research into the literary representation of Europe in Dutch literature. It is clear that in the 19th century, the representation of Europe was created gradually – it started from the fatherland and ended with Europe. For the depiction of Europe, authors draw from mechanisms (excluding "the other", creating heroes) and types of metaphors (animals, the body) that were commonly used in the discourse of national representation. This might indicate a lack of European sense of consciousness, but the amount and diversity of European connotations does not point in that direction. It is more likely that a European discourse was not fully developed and that authors drew back on mechanisms and depictions that they also used in a national context. One group of metaphors did not make the crossing to the European representation, and that is the family metaphor. This metaphor was reserved for the national representation.

In Waterloo literature, Europe has a head and a heart, but no hands and feet. Nor does she have a father or sons. It is no wonder that some people are worried nowadays about Europe's common future.

Janneke Weijermars
University of Groningen, The Netherlands